



Administrative Office of Courts

ACDD, MIS, Juvenile, & Traffic Divisions

TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

Welcome

In this month's issue, we will feature Programming's new Leave Accounting System, contact information, and an article highlighting use of technology to ease the burden on a Circuit Clerk's office in one of Alabama's fastest growing counties .

As always, if you have any special news that you would like featured, please email us at newsletter@alacourt.gov .

Division Spotlight

Erica Coleman is one of the senior technology staff members having been employed by the Judicial System for some 10 years. While at the AOC, Erica has worked on the Juvenile System, the Y2K conversion project and was one of the first "mainframe" programmers to begin the retraining process for moving to server and PC based application.

Currently, Erica is completing a server-based Leave Accounting System that will replace the paper leave request forms and leave card. This system allows an employee to access his or her individual balances, request sick or annual leave while on-line and, when approved by the supervisor post the leave to the leave summary. All-in-all, the new process will replace many pieces of paper that must be maintained by judicial staff and many hours of posting to the leave cards.

Additional benefits include required end-of-years reports that AOC fiscal must prepare to estimate the liability for accumulated leave and other such requests.

The Leave Accounting System will be tested at the AOC in November and then piloted in some counties by the end of the year. Hopefully, the entire state will be on the new process in time for the cut over to twice monthly pay periods beginning in April, 2006..

Administrative
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Personnel Division

USERNAME: SUBMIT

PASSWORD: RESET

IF YOU FORGOT YOUR USERNAME AND/OR PASSWORD, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR SUPERVISOR

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Alabama Judicial Building
300 Dexter Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36104

Newsletter Spotlight

Welcome

Division Spotlight

New fax numbers

Courthouse Technology

October Birthdays

Keisha Thomas 10/23

Jack Doane 10/25



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Questions or comments? E-mail us at newsletter@alacourt.gov



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TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

Once you have accessed the site through the password protected page, you will see folders in the left column. These folders are where you can access Leave Balances, Accrual Rate, History, Request Leave, and Pending Requests. This will be a convenient way for you to keep current with your leave.

This is an example of the “Request Leave” page.

Administrative Office of Courts



The AOC fax number has changed to:
334-954-5200

We appreciate your patience through our transition period.



Alabama Central Disbursement Division

Please Note:
The ACDD fax number has changed.

334-954-5181

Please begin using immediately.

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TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

The Birmingham News

Technology helps offset small staff of circuit clerk

Monday, August 22, 2005

NANCY WILSTACH

News staff writer

Shelby County Circuit Clerk Mary Harris said technology is making public access to her office a bit easier these days, despite staffing levels from the 1980s.

In an effort to keep her staff off the phone as much as possible, Harris has filled her Web site with answers to questions people often have about subjects such as jury duty, traffic tickets, passports and absentee voting.

The problem with telephone calls is that the assistant clerks must stop updating files, typing records and creating dockets and jury lists.

The fastest-growing county in the state does not have the fastest-growing clerk's office, Harris said. "We still have the same number of employees we had in 1989 - 16."

She noted a statistic that bugs her a bit. According to recent estimates and growth patterns, "we have passed Tuscaloosa County in population. The Tuscaloosa clerk's office has 31 employees," she said.

"In 1994, a state manpower study said we should have 21.5 people," Harris said, but state court system funding hasn't allowed her to hire more help. Meanwhile, the office's workload has almost tripled.

Shelby cases increase:

The number of Shelby County cases - civil, criminal, small claims, domestic relations, juvenile, traffic, child support and warrants - increased from 10,793 in 1990 to 27,145 in 2004.

When Harris, 51, came to the office straight out of high school as a rookie typist in 1972, the office dealt with a grand jury and its resulting stacks of indictments, new criminal case files and warrants twice a year.

"Now we have grand jury once a month except July, and we have more terms of court," she said.

Nineteen terms of jury trials are set this year.

Sending out jury notices no longer falls on the clerk's office, Harris said. Those issue from Montgomery now. But prospective jurors still have a lot of questions.

A Web site at <http://18jc.alacourt.gov> answers many of the questions people are accustomed to asking on the telephone, Harris said. She has two pieces of advice for Shelby Countians with court business: "Check the Web site first, and remember that there is no 'www' in the address."

Frequent questions:

On the site, Harris has a list of jurors' frequently asked questions, along with the answers. They range from such simple queries as what to wear to more complicated questions posed by people who have medical problems, who are worried about losing a day's pay or who live in Shelby County but work in another state.

Another set of questions and answers covers absentee voting, a responsibility of the clerk's office.

The state court system has found some ways to ease the burden on clerks' offices, including a state-maintained Web site that allows offenders to pay traffic tickets on-line. Called Alapay, it has collected more than \$65,000 since March for Shelby County.

Harris credits Chief Justice Drayton Nabers of the Alabama Supreme Court with a willingness to listen to clerks' ideas.

One time-saving idea that the state court system allows, however, Harris has rejected so far. "The chief justice has authorized clerks' offices to close for up to 10 hours a week," she said.

The thinking behind the closing is that, without the public coming into the office, clerks can try to catch up on paperwork. Some counties shut down from noon until 2 p.m., for example.

"I feel strongly about people taking off from work to handle court business and having to wait an hour or two hours because the office is closed," Harris said. "We don't even close for lunch."

Not afraid to ask:

Harris also is not ashamed to ask the public for help. Each person called for jury duty soon gets the word on how state budget-slashing has hobbled operations in the clerk's office. Then, along with their checks for jury service, jurors get the opportunity to donate their pay to a fund Harris maintains to pay part-time help, a fund that jurors have aided to the tune of \$7,365.40 since October 2003.

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